quality are procured. These biological (vaccine/serum) whether indigenously produced or imported cannot be marketed unless their quality is certified by the Central Drug Laboratory at Kasauli. There has been no complaint about the quality of these vaccines.

Anti-rabies immunoglobulin is life saving medicine for passive immunization and provides the immediate availability of neutralizing antibodies at the site of bite to tide over the initial phase of infection before the patient begins to produce his or her own antibodies after anti-rabies vaccination. Hence, national and international (WHO) guidelines recommend administration of immunoglobulin in all category III exposures and category II exposure in immune compromised patients.

Equine rabies immunoglobulin (ERIG) is one of the products available for passive immunization. ERIG currently manufactured are potent, highly purified, safe and not expensive. These are used in the countries where rabies continues to be major public health problem.

Effect of economic recession on railways

†*280. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have also been affected by the economic recession, which has pervaded almost all the sectors in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that freightage has been adversely affected due to this; and

(d) if so, the details thereof for the last one year ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Transportation is a derived demand based on the growth in the economy. In the year 2007-08, loading on Indian Railways was 794.21 million tonnes, which was 65.44 million tonnes & 8.98% more than the loading of 728.77 million tonnes in 2006-07. In the period April-September'08, loading was 8.55% more than the loading in corresponding period of 2007.

However, in the month of October 2008, freight loading registered a negative growth of 0.14% over corresponding month of last year. In November 2008 also, the increment was only 1.29% over last year which is below our expectations.

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WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTION

Spreading of stem rust fungal disease in wheat

2015. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether to prevent any occurrence of the stem rust fungal disease in wheat which has rapidly spread in parts of the African Countries and beyond, the ICAR has formed a special team to survey and monitor the wheat crop in parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the special team;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.